



News Release

Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency

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Arlington, VA 22203-1714

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MICHAEL FRANCIS TO DIRECT JOINT UNMANNED COMBAT AIR SYSTEMS OFFICE

The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) today announced the appointment of Michael S. Francis as first Director of the Joint Unmanned Combat Air Systems Office [revised]. His appointment is effective September 29. The office was previously known as the Joint Systems Management Office [revised].

The Joint Unmanned Combat Air Systems Office [revised] is the DARPA activity charged with leading the DoD effort to develop and demonstrate a Joint Unmanned Combat Air System. As Director of the Office, Francis will report to the Director of DARPA. His staff includes representatives from DARPA, Air Force and Navy. The Office will be co-located with DARPA's other offices in Arlington, Va.

Francis comes to DARPA from Lockheed Martin, where he was Director, Technical Integration, Corporate Engineering and Technology. In 1997, he retired from the U.S. Air Force as a Colonel. He has previously served at DARPA as a program manager, directing the X-31 and Micro Air Vehicle programs. He started DARPA's Unmanned Tactical Aircraft program in 1994, the precursor to today's Joint Unmanned Combat Air System program.

Francis also led development of the DoD's first integrated air-space surveillance architecture at the Defense Airborne Reconnaissance Office and managed several space system development programs for the Air Force Space and Missile Systems Center and the Strategic Defense Initiative Organization. Following retirement from the U.S. Air Force, Francis was Vice President for Advanced Technology for Aurora Flight Sciences Corp., and later founded and became first president of Athena Technologies Inc. He is a fellow of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, and is winner of the 1995 National Air and Space Museum Trophy and the Aviation Week & Space Technology Laurels Award.

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